

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 11 and 13-16 are presently pending in this application. Claims 1-10, 12 and 17-20 have been canceled without prejudice in an effort to expedite prosecution of allowable subject matter. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute the canceled subject matter in a copending application.

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action, at page 7, the Examiner indicated that dependent Claim 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims.

In this regard, Claim 13 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claims namely independent Claim 10, and intervening dependent Claim 12. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent Claim 13 and each of the claims now depending therefrom, namely Claims 11 and 14-16, are in condition for allowance.

The Specification

The disclosure was objected to because of certain informalities. Appropriate corrections have been made to the specification.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 17, 19, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,213,988 to McIvor. Claims 1 and 17 have been canceled without prejudice, thus obviating this rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,095,981 to McGahan. Claim 10 has been canceled without prejudice, thus obviating this rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McIvor in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,644,957 to Ricciardelli et al. Claim 4 has been canceled without prejudice, thus obviating this rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McIvor in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,500,012 to Brucker et al. Claims 7-9 have been canceled without prejudice, thus obviating this rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McGahan in view of Ricciardelli et al. Claim 11 has been amended to depend from amended Claim 13, which was objected to as being dependant upon a rejected base claim and has been placed in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McGahan. Claim 12 has been canceled without prejudice, thus obviating this rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

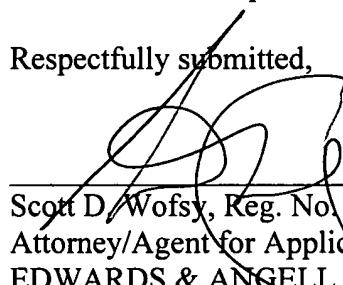
Claims 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McGahan in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,500,012 to Brucker et al. Claims 14-16 have been amended to depend from amended Claim 13, which was objected to as being dependant upon a rejected base claim and has been placed in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that all of the claims presently under consideration in this application, namely Claims 11 and 13-16, are directed to patentable subject matter, and allowance thereof is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner believes that a telephonic or personal interview would resolve any remaining matters, the undersigned may be contacted at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott D. Wofsy, Reg. No. 35,413
Attorney/Agent for Applicant
EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP
P.O. Box 55874
Boston, MA 02205
Telephone: (203) 353-6831
FAX: (203) 975-7180
Customer No. 21874

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